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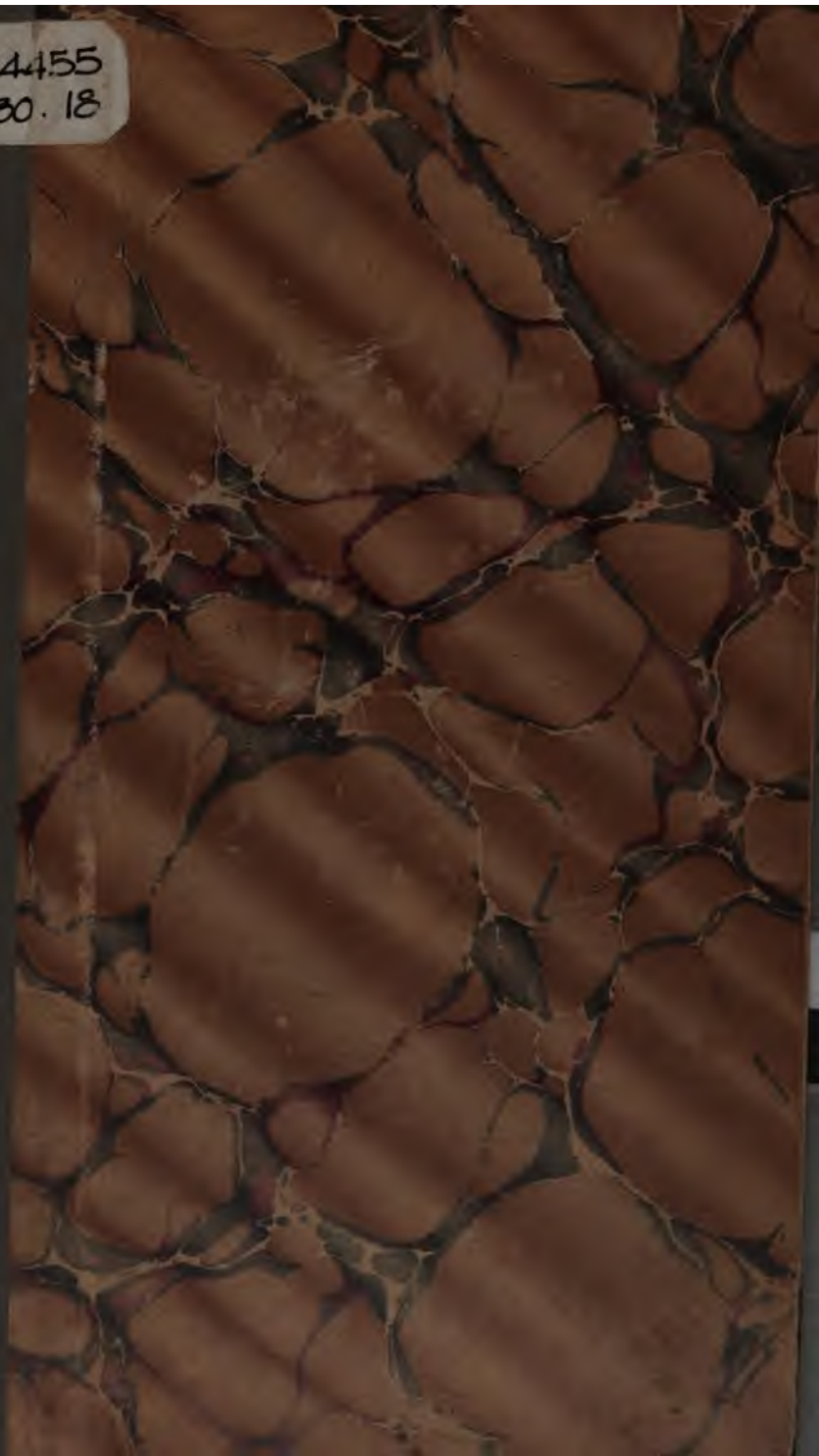
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A Smale Handfull of Fragrant Flowers. 1575

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A SMALE
handfull of fragrant

Flowers, selected and gathered
out of the lovely garden of sacred scrip-
tures, fit for any Honorable or
worshipfull Gentlewo-
man to smell vnto.

Dedicated for a Newe-
yeres gyft, to the honorable
and vertuous Lady, the Lady
Sheffeld.

By N. B.

Printed in the University of Oxford.
Imprinted at London, by Richard
Iones. And are to be solde
at his shop, at the South-
west doore of
Pauls.

1575.

To the right Honorable and vertuous Lady,
the Lady Sheffeld, N. B. wisheth con-
tinual health, with continuall
of honours.



AS I must of necessitie (right hono-
rable and vertuous Lady) give leave to
and libertie unto such as altogether search
out the strange operations of things wil-
lough incredible to the rude and ignorant sort:
So reposing a confidence in your noble degree,
ready prest to accept the simple gift of a yong and unskilful hus-
bandman, I am the more bold: to present your Ladyship with
this litle handfull of Flowers, the sent wherof I trust being
gathered in so fruitful a time, wil so revive your senses, that your
godly industrie wil vouchsafe to plant the roote therof in the
Gardē of nobilitie, which I am assured, being watered with
the due understanding of the fountein of knowledge, cannot chuse
but encrease to a defenseable castle, and a godly modest de-
meanor. As therefore on this wherof full, your vertuous life is such as
rather alloweth the godly worke of a simple scollor, willing by
dayly practise to grow unto more & exacter ripenes of understand-
ing. And on the other part is ready to prefer the base & contrary
mans pen, to the end that I might hereafter take the more hart
of grace, to attempt a more substantial peece of worke. And then
if it shal please the almighty to be my guide, in future time I wil
not be forgetfull of your Honors clemencie, which the almighty
God shall garde and furnish plentifully with increase & magnificence
of verovine for ever.

Your most humble to com-
maunde N. B.



¶ *John Parcells pamphlet in the*
praise of this handful of flowres.

The little Be, saye Ladies al,
Bringes more increase then both the Right,
Wherefore although this booke be small,
The flowres thereof may wel delight,
A seconde pearles Saba quene,
Because they are continuall greene.

¶ Peruse them well therefore and say,
We haue the choyse of good and yll,
Yet if my counsel by the way,
Might bryge your minde or moue your wyll,
To imitat this pece of worke,
For many a pearle therein dothe lurke.

¶ For though the fountayne be not here,
Of heauenly health that doth excell,
Yet to your sight may playne appere,
The golden Bucket of the Well,
Wherefore deare dames keepe that in store,
And tyme wyl yelde to you the more.

¶ It is no Poetes fable olde,
It is no gaude nor trifle bayne,
It is a gifte excellling golde :
In which the Gentle state may trayne,

A. ii.

Them

Then selues to goodly exercise,
And learne thereby fo; to be wise.

¶ Seache therfore suche a Honycombe,
And trye the same with diligence,
It is no fruitles vanishing foame,
It is a cerce of excellence:
The ioyce whereof beyng pleasant swete,
Is fo; a curteous Patrone mete.

¶ Thus virgins, wyues, and widowes be,
If that you tender your estate,
Learne as he teacheth you to do,
That framde this Poetic fo; your sake:
And than you can not lose the crowne,
Diana holdeth with renowne.

F. P.



The booke to the Reader.

Since I praye booke am put into thy hand,
although the forme or volume little be,
Yet Reader deare that I be thoroughly scand
with ielous minde I begge and craue, of thee
Be seeme to iudge or sentence thine to frame,
Before throughout thou do peruse the same.

Reade not as though thou wouldest forget agayne,
such fruitles sayth bringes profite none at all:
But if thou wilt reape merite for thy payne,
let not regarde from wanted custome fall,
Which as I reade by wise men is desired,
While time doth serue, to beare the fruits in mind.

If then I cast a iewel vnto thee,
play not the Cocke that Esop speaketh on,
Who rather craved a barlye corne to see:
then for to finde the costly precious stone,
But if I might giue counsel with the rest,
First reade, the chuse such fruits as lyke thee best.

Hold me excused, and take my maisters Muse,
in as good part as payne he doth bestowe,
Let his good will his simple worke excuse,
for were it much moze better: to bestowe
For thy delcght he woulde vouchsafe his toyle,
And yelde to thee the croppes of suche a soyle,

F I N I S.

The Author to his Lady in verse.

In auncient tyme the golden guile
of Patrons great renouwen,
Was for to striue in vertues schole,
who should enioye the crowne:
So that eche bzaunche of noblenes,
surpassed in those dayes.
Because they sought by their attempt
to winne immortall praise:
As for example, Lucrece chaste,
and famous sacred lyfe
May record be, who as I reade,
was Collatinus wyfe.

And next to her, that pearle of price,
whiche Triata had to name.
By constant loue to Mansolus
both manifest the same.
Chirolly, quene Artimelia reapt
the Scepter by desert,
That could as well as all the rest,
most finely play her part.
But synce that Sabbas wisdom great,
in honour yours doth raigne.
I must deare L adie wish to you

for women to smel to.

aswel, as to the frayne.
For why? the garland that you weare
is euer fresh and graine,
And serues most fit in Court therewith,
to tende vpon a Quene,

The modestie of Patrons mylar,
bedeck with vertue rounde.
There is no wight but well may see
in you so; to abounde.
So that a patern to the nimphes
of Court and courtly crewe,
Your Ladship resembleth well,
as plainely they may be se.
For on the one side garded with
Dame vertue you doe enter:
And on the other, continence
encourageth you to venter.

Wherefore, since then defended with
such ayde to your degre.
Your noble race procureth these
your daies with ioyes to se,
That Flora, Susan, and the rest
attaind vnto the ende.
Your Vneur might conceiue my cause,
a slowe and thankles friend,
If that this time he should negle

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A handfull of flowres

Gave little Daniel warrantice,
to be her Judge, wherewith he shynge
Amidst the pease with helpe divine,
and rescued Susan at that tyme.

Then when her stedfastnes was knowne,
and howe she sented of that flower,
Whiche in Dianas holwer was solwen,
the carnall Judges fleshy power
Was cut full short, and the like case
was honozed in the iudgement place.

Wherby thy spizig of constancie,
Wherwell farre surpassing gold,
Preserued by the eternitie,
as a looking glasse for to behold,
To suche as couet with renoune,
to weare that chaste and pearcles crowne.

This pleasant brymthe in Sarcas best,
was dayly bled for a thowre,
So that her sayth among the rest,
thereby did bountifullly growe.
And she extolled was therefore,
as noble Patrone cucumore.

Whermyght I call to memozie,
Rebecca mild and Iudith chaste,

for women to smel to.

By whose great fayth and constancie,
Holofernes power was soze agasse,
So that as playne the scriptures say,
his hostes were fayne to flye away.

Since then ye Ladies of degre,
and honoꝝ nimphe within the place,
Wher eas that pearles dame may bes,
which al the Goddes inspire with grace,
This flowre I say doth sent so well,
accept the sweete and sauiery smell.

There is no odious stinck at all,
of any worldly infamie,
That can procure your ruynous fall,
yf you reteyne this constancie,
And therfore Ladies plucke this flowre,
so; why it withereth neuer an houre.

The second budde is modestie,
which Triata did muche delyght.
And furnished the companie,
of many a Romane matrone bright,
So that no blemishe there did growe,
as long as they the same coulde shoue.

The thirde is vertuous exercise,
the fourth is called humilitie,

A handfull of flowres

The fifth, to set before your eyes,
the feare of God most reuerently.

The sixth obedience to the crowne,
and Princes lawes with great reuerence.

The seventh is Patience, for to beare
the crosse of Christ continually:

The eighth is liberall talke to beare,
and vse the same indifferently:

The ninth is called Chastitie:
the tenth, to put by iniurie.

The eleventh is to sustayne the poore:
the twelfth to aide the comfortles,

And to endeavour more and more,
to trayne your steppes to godlynes.

The thirteenth, that is chafest skill,
which we do call, do god for ill.

The fourteenth is to looe the trouth,
and flatterie wholly for to shunne:

The fifteenth, barre the chaire of slooth,
whereby full many are vndonne:

For idelnes doth shame but turne,
and is the entrance vnto synne.

The sixteenth flower is willing zeale
vnto the sacred veritie:

which

Which is a lantarne to your fate,
to leade you to sinceritie :
The seuententh blossome fresh of hue,
in woordes and dedes so; to be true.

The eyghtenth is so; to restoze
that by opporession hath ben gotte:
The niententh so; to cure that soze,
which carelesse conscience makes to rotte :
The twentieth is sweete Charitie,
the fruites wherof begin to dye.

There are besides these, godly loue,
whose leaues though they be not so greene,
Yet who to plucke therof wyl proue,
shall with Lucrecia sone be seene,
To shine in woordes and dedes as bright,
as when the moon doth yelde her light.

Now Gentles, this smal bunche of flowres,
It is that may encrease your fame,
For they be watered with the showres,
that sacred Scriptures haue to name:
You may discerne them by the seedes,
full much vnlyke to woordly wordes.

Take heede therefore howe you reied,
the simplest flowre among them all,

A handful of flowres

For if disdayne do you insect,
to plucke one leafe the rest wyl fall:
Do not therefore the threde buttwinde,
Which doth this prettie posse vynde.

The name thereof is diligence,
in seeking vertuous company:
A string of great preheminence,
giuen vnto vs in generally.
Therewith eche godly wyght doth make,
A snare therewith eche vice to take.

Two Patrones therefore I require,
as one that wisheth al were well:
To beare a zeale and full desire,
to bye these flowres that so dyd smell.
Shall the bountie of the Lorde,
with all your workes right well accorde.

o whom be honoꝝ, power, and fame,
praise, laude, and sempiternitie:
oth God and man sweete Christe the same,
who planted for a certayntie.
these flowres in heauenly paradise,
for such to gather as will be wise.

is blessing say, and let vs craue,
to lyght vpon our soueraigne Queene:
Who

for women to smell to.

Whom we may see in hande to haue
this litle branche of Flowres greene.
Which sends and sanours passing well,
the reddest way to heauen to smell.

Her counsell and nobilitie,
the Pastors of the Church lyke case:
The mightie God continually,
byd we with golden dropes of grace.
That they may serue her maiestie:
With reuerence and humilitie.

 A prayer for gentlewomen
and others to vse, whereby through
the helpe of the deuine grace, they may
attayne the right sence of this poesie of
Gods Flowres.

Vnduchsafe, O Lorde, to be our guyde,
thy spirite of grace into vs powze:
Defende our cause on euery side,
that we may passe into the bolwre:
Wher eas those heauenly Flowres do growe:
By Christ that Garden first dyd sowe.

Illuminate our inwarde minde,
to seeke to thee continually:

From worldly Erours that be blind,
preserue vs so; thy Paellie.
Teache vs as we in wordes professe,
In dedes eache one to do no lesse.

Assist vs dayly to begin,
spiritually to enteright
Agaynst the worlde, the flesh, and sinne,
that we may shunne the duskie nyght.
In whiche our enimie the deuill,
Doth watche to worke eache Christian euill.

Arme vs with sayth to beare the shield,
and sword of heauenly puritie:
Crowne vs with Helmet in the fild,
of thy surpassing veritie.
Graunt this O bounteous Iesu sweete,
That we with thee at last may meete.

F I N I S.



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A small handful of fragrant flower

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